

SPECIAL
COLLECTIONS



DOUGLAS LIBRARY

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
AT KINGSTON

KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA

SOME
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
Present State
OF
AFFAIRS,
IN A
LETTER
TO A
MEMBER
OF THE
House of Commons.

By a MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

L O N D O N:
Printed for J. Roberts at the Oxford-Arms
in Warwick-Lane. 1731.

11-11-21.1045

SOME
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
Present State
OF
AFFAIRS, &c.

SIR,

I Have taken the Liberty, according to your own Desire, of giving you my Opinion concerning what will be probably the principal Subject of Debate this Sessions of Parliament, with my Sentiments on the Points themselves, as well as some Account of the principal Actors on that Stage. This being the first Time of your Appearance in that publick Assembly, it is highly proper you should be informed of what you are to meet with there, without which you might be liable to make but an indifferent Figure, as well as subject to be led into great Mistakes.

B

It

It is now above Thirty Years since I first was employ'd in this publick Station, and I have constantly observed that Men undo themselves at their first setting out in the World, by running inconsiderately into some Party. They often fall into a wrong one, which is most likely, because there is always more Art, and more Design, in that Quarter, than in the other; and they are then reduced to the melancholy Necessity of continuing for ever in the wrong Way, or of losing their Characters by changing it for another.

To avoid this Inconvenience, you should guard yourself, as much as possible you can, against the Spirit of Faction, which is always prevalent in a Country of Liberty. It spreads itself thro' all Ages, and all Degrees of Men; but it is more especially predominant in young Country Gentlemen like yourself, that Time of Life being commonly best pleased with any thing that favours of Opposition or Ridicule.

It would preserve a great Number of Persons from being seduced by this natural Infirmary, if they would consider, that it may prove of as ill Consequence to a Nation for ever to oppose the Measures of a Prince, as to abandon oneself entirely to his arbitrary Will. As the latter would infallibly reduce us into Slavery, so the former would inevitably plunge us into Anarchy

chy and Confusion ; but the one being too shocking for any Man to do, or at least for so many as to make it much to be apprehended, we ought more particularly to guard against the other, of which we have frequent Instances every Day.

It is not at all surprising if we are, at first, apt to conclude a Minister to be in the Wrong, because many Men of Distinction and seeming Merit oppose him. 'Till a Man has been some time conversant in the World, he will not easily be convinc'd that humane Nature is so corrupt ; he will find it difficult to conceive that we should be capable of sacrificing our Honour and Conscience to our Resentment ; but we live in an Age too degenerate for any one to continue long in this Error. He will quickly find there are Men, or rather Monsters, that, muffled in the Cloaks of Loyalty and Patriotism, are perpetually watching Opportunities to assassinate both their Prince and their Country.

The Nature of the Post of a first Minister necessarily attracts the Envy of the World ; then surely a Situation so expos'd to the Strokes of Fortune, so impossible to be maintain'd without disoblighing Multitudes, is very little desirable ; yet we see it the Endeavour of every ambitious Man to overturn the Person that possesses that Place, and to come in his Room.

This is almost the never-failing End of great Men, and they have hardly any Comfort, but a certain Assurance that their Successors will meet with the same Fate.

Of this Set of Men there are always a great Number in every Age. In our own we have one in particular, whose sole Aim appears to be, the making himself infamous to Posterity for Malice and Envy ; as we have another who prides himself in having exceeded any one of his Species in Instances of Ingratitude.

On the other Hand, there is a Minister, who, if you believe the worthy Gentlemen just mention'd, is infinitely a greater Proficient in the infamous Practices that may undo a Country, than all the *Sejanus's* and *Wolfey's* in the World together ; an Embezzeler of the publick Monies, a Pensioner in foreign Courts, and a Blunderbuss in Politicks.

But the Misfortune is, these Gentlemen do themselves more Prejudice by these Assertions, than any Body else. They have, in many of their Papers (I need not say on what Views) extoll'd the Judgment of his Majesty, and commended his Affection to his People ; How weak must it then be in them, to call him a Villain and a Block-head, who is chosen as the most capable and most deserving Person, by the most honest, and most discerning Prince, according to
their

their own Confession? I am sensible they may answer, that the wisest Man may be deceived; but then he will not be deceived by a Fool; nor can he be blinded to Faults (if any such there were) which are pointed out in the plainest Terms to him every Day.

It is the Property of a wise and honest Minister, to despise the vain Attempts of this Kind of Men; and knowing himself thoroughly attach'd to the Interest of his Country, to be without Apprehensions of any thing they can do to him; and so far the present Gentleman in the Administration is as wise and honest as any one that ever enjoy'd his Post — *He bears them no Esteem for their pretended Patriotism, nor entertains the least Fear of them for their real Malice.*

Every Day produces fresh Instances of these personal Animosities; and these personal Animosities produce fresh Struggles between two Persons, the one endeavouring to preserve his Post, perhaps only to keep his Enemy out of it; the other with as much Probability contending for it, singly with a View of doing those Things truly himself, of which he accuses his Adversary falsely.

These ridiculous Disputes would be far beneath our Notice, if the Consequences of them were not of much greater Moment,

ment, if they were not extremely prejudicial to the Interest of *Great Britain*, in the Hindrance they occasion to his Majesty's Measures both at Home and Abroad. They not only obstruct the Formation of them, let them be ever so prudent, but they have likewise as bad an Effect on them when they come to be put in Execution.

Let the Authors on the other Side make as great a Joke of it as they please, yet I am confident it will appear very reasonable to any impartial Judgment, that such a Spirit of Contention must render us very contemptible to our Neighbours; and that the Measures of his Majesty, tho' they have had as much Success as we could reasonable desire (and much more, I am sure, than we could reasonably expect, considering all Things) yet they had still procur'd us more Advantages, and those Advantages had been obtain'd in less Time, and with less Difficulties, but for these unnatural Dissentions among ourselves.

As the Instability of Councils in a limited Monarchy is well known to be the only Misfortune attending on it, so the contrary is the only Blessing of arbitrary Governments. They have the Happiness of meeting with no Opposition in conducting any Affair they engage in, which is so necessary in Things of this Kind, that bad Measures

Measures will often have Success from a brisk Execution of them, when good ones will fail by a faint one.

If our Affairs had gone on in a less prosperous Manner, and those Calamities had fallen on the Nation which they only say have, and probably wish had fallen on us, the Blame, in that Case, had been so far from lying at that Door where they have laid it, that it had entirely been due to themselves, who took Advantage of the weak Side of their Country, and let in the Enemy at the Back-door, which they should have guarded with the greatest Concord and Unanimity.

Their Intentions have been suspicious in this Respect: They have been notorious in another. If they gave us Occasion to doubt their Zeal for the Interest of the Nation, by opposing good Measures, at so critical a Juncture, when it had been dangerous even to oppose bad ones, they have given us no room to be deceived in their Duty to their Sovereign, by their seditious Libels and Pamphlets. They could propose but three Things by their Writings; either to convince the King that the Measures he had stamp'd with his Approbation were weak and dangerous; to convince the People of it; or to convince them both of it. The Treatment they have given his Majesty is so Cavalier, that they could hardly
hope

hope to do either the First or the Last; they must therefore necessarily have endeavoured to effect the Second, which was to make the People believe it; and this they must have done either before they had declared their Apprehensions in Parliament, or after: If before, why did not they apply themselves to the Representatives of the People, in whom the Right of Judging in these Affairs is lodg'd by their own Consent? If after, how dar'd they to appeal from the Sentence of a Court from which there is no Appeal allow'd by Law, and which, if there was, would have Consequences too terrible for me so much as to hint at?

This Privilege, which they have assum'd to themselves, of repining at the Decrees of the Parliament, and of discussing over again those Points which have already been determined by the Legislature (a Thing not even allow'd in the House itself) they have, unjustly, honour'd with the Name of the Liberty of the Press; which being a darling Point with the People of *England*, and consequently a proper Instrument for such wicked Purposes, they have continually, and will, without doubt, constantly represent in Danger; tho' they have no other Reason for their Apprehensions, than what are occasion'd by their being incapable of considering any thing but their
own

own personal Interest themselves, and consequently of expecting to meet with any else in others ; but the contrary is so true, that neither King or Ministry had ever Inclination, much less a Thought of any thing like it ; very far from it : They are as sensible of the Necessity of it, as the truest Patriot can be, and would as much abhor the Wretch that should engage in so flagitious an Attempt ; tho' at the same time, they may possibly fear, and, I believe, as the Generality of considerate Men do, that, as our Constitution has been more than once preserv'd by a good Use of that Liberty, so it will be ruin'd at last by a bad one.

This is one of the Subjects upon which these Gentlemen employ their Rhetorick. I submit it to your Judgment who best deserves to be esteem'd an Enemy to the Liberty of the Press, the Persons accused, or the Persons that accuse ; those that have never yet utter'd one Word which could be construed to that Sense they are pleased to put upon it, and who have, both in publick and private Conversation, express'd themselves constantly to a different Effect ; or they who, by a monstrous Abuse of it, have endeavoured to render it odious both to the Prince and the People. Surely these Men must have a very poor Opinion of the Judgment of the Publick, if they could

C

propose

propose Success from this Proceeding : They could hardly hope to impose upon any reasonable Man, a Belief they could not entertain themselves, without being (what every one knows they are not, and what is hardly possible they should be) as Weak as they are Wicked.

I shall therefore leave this groundless Charge, and proceed to examine another Point which has made much Noise the last, and will probably make more this present Session of Parliament : This is the Treaty concluded at *Seville* in 1729 ; and from this Battery they have play'd indefatigably on the Ministry. They were very sensible that they had the most Reason to expect to deceive the Publick in an Affair of this kind, as it was what the Generality of Men least understood ; and as it is the Vanity of every People, but more especially of our own, to be thought knowing in Politics, so they made the greatest Advantage of that Weakness, by appealing to them as the properest and best Judges : They improv'd a Notion, which probably first ow'd its Birth to themselves, that a Treaty must be a bad one, if it adds no new Advantages, no new Acquisitions to what we had before ; whereas Treaties of this Kind are never to be expected but at the End of a successful War ; they are of a very different Nature in a Time of Peace. In this Case,

Case, all that Men of Sense can expect, or Men of Honour and Justice can desire, is to confirm the precedent Treaties, and to preserve the Benefits you have already obtained from them, by those you make afterwards. I will agree, indeed, that in the former Case a Minister deserves to be hang'd if he does not procure Advantages, and those very considerable ones, for his Country ; which is a Truth that would have silenced a certain Person of their Party, if he had not more Bias than another of a different Side of the Question, to whom they ascribe a great deal.

The Occasion of the Treaty of *Seville* was this : The Treaty which was concluded at *Utrecht* in the Year 1713, tho' it put a Stop to all violent Proceedings for some time, yet it did not totally extinguish all Animosities between the Princes concern'd in it : Whether it proceeded from a real Want of Judgment in some Ministers, who have since only accus'd others of it, or from any other Cause (Corruption only excepted, which surely it could not be, when those Ministers have since charg'd it with so much Assurance on the present Administration) I say, from whatsoever Cause it proceeded, it is undoubtedly certain that there still remain'd a general Discontent, which, encreasing every Day, seem'd to threaten *Europe* with a new Flame. This

Misfortune was the Occasion of the Treaty of *Hanover*, the Quadruple Alliance, with several others of less Moment, and last of all this Treaty of *Seville*, the Subject of our present Enquiry.

To speak more plainly to the Point: The Treaty of *Seville* owes its Being to the Animosities either rais'd by, or left unextinguish'd at the Peace of *Utrecht*, and to an Alliance formed in Consequence of them between the Emperor and the King of *Spain*. An Alliance, which, as it was highly formidable to *Europe* in general, from the Powers concern'd in it, was so much more, to *Great Britain* in particular, from the Stipulations it contain'd, which tended to no less than the Loss of our foreign Possessions, the Ruin of our Trade, and the Imposing on us a Sovereign who had render'd (the only Happiness they propos'd to have left us) our Liberties of no Effect.

This being the Case, I think it had sufficiently justified the Conduct of our Ministers, tho' they had actually done what, in Truth, they have not done; tho' if they had enter'd into Engagements in which we were to have born the greatest Burthen, our principal Business was to have broken so dangerous a Conjunction at any Expence whatsoever, and to have engag'd, on our Side, some other Power capable of restoring the Equilibrium which was lost before;

before ; the first of these was effected by the Treaty of *Seville*, and the latter by the Alliance with *France*, which, as much as it has been found Fault with, was certainly, according to all humane Probability, the only Step that could have sav'd *Europe* from universal Monarchy, or, at least, from a general War.

We will here allow the Gentlemen on the other Side, *for once*, that what they say is true, and that the *French* are a People entirely void of Faith and Honour, totally given up to their particular Interests ; we desire no better Argument than their own to defend our entering, at this Juncture, into an Alliance with that Nation. It can never be their Interest to suffer another Power to aggrandize itself, which would not happen but that in the End it must be at their own Expence ; and if it does not appear to be their Interest, from their own Principles, we may then conclude ourselves certain of their Fidelity.

What has been already said, will suffice to justify the Ministers in making the Treaty of *Seville*. Their Adversaries must now confine themselves to find Fault with the Manner in which it was made. There are but three Articles in it that deserve the Attention either of the one Side or the other. It is true, indeed, an honourable Member (as he is pleas'd to call himself) has

has taken a great deal of Pains to make almost every Paragraph ridiculous ; but it is foreign to my present Design to take Notice of any thing that is trifling : My Purpose is only to give you a general Idea of the Business you are to have a Share in, and to enable you to make a sound and just Judgment of most of the considerable Points of it in particular.

The three Articles just mentioned, are those which relate to *Gibraltar* ; to the Restoration of our Commerce in the *West-Indies*, and to the Satisfaction for the Losses of our Merchants in those Parts ; and to the settling *Don Carlos* in *Italy*. The two first solely concern ourselves ; the last (as they say) only our Enemies ; but of that hereafter.

The first is that which relates to *Gibraltar*. This Fortrefs was, almost, the only Benefit we obtain'd by the Success of our Arms against *France*, and, perhaps, it was for that Reason first insinuated to be of so great Importance, which, by the by, is still disputed ; but however that Matter is determin'd, there is one Thing certain, that it was not secur'd to us in a proper Manner by the Treaty of *Utrecht*, and that the Difficulties the present Administration have met with on that Account, were owing to the Errors (I might call them by a harsher Name) of another, in which the honourable

able Member lately mention'd may find one of his dear Friends to have been concern'd.

Notwithstanding this, both the honourable Member, and his Friend, but more particularly the latter, have been very forward to accuse the Ministry of Negligence in this very Point; tho' that Gentleman would do better to let any thing of this kind entirely alone; yet he would be more excusable in meddling with any other Branch of Politicks than that which has relation to Treaties.

I beg of you, Sir, to give yourself the Trouble of Reading over the Treaty we are now upon; it will be the properest Way to acquaint you with the Principles of these Men; you will find *Gibraltar* secur'd to us, in the very second Article, in the strongest and plainest Terms that can be devis'd; both their *Britannick*, *Christian*, and *Catholick* Majesties — *promising and engaging to Guarantee reciprocally their Kingdoms, States, and Dominions under their Obedience in what Part of the World soever situate*; before they can prove that this does not fully comprehend *Gibraltar*, they must first prove it under the Obedience of some other Prince, and situated in the Moon, or some one of the Planets.

But they alledge, That we would have specifically mention'd *Gibraltar*, without
which

which our Right to that Place must be still precarious, and, consequently, liable to be again disputed by *Spain*, upon any new Difference between us : And here they make no Allowance for the natural Vanity and Pride of that People, which it would have been very ridiculous for us not to have indulg'd them in, considering such an Indulgence could not in any respect be prejudicial to us ; and that it could not be so, appears very plainly : For, if to render the Guarantee effectual, it had been necessary to mention the Dominions guaranteed ; Why were it not as necessary that *Great Britain* and *Ireland* should be likewise nominally inserted ? How could his Majesty be so careless with respect to *Hanover*, concerning which they insinuate him to be so extremely solicitous ? But neither the King, nor his Ministers, have been accus'd of Negligence in any of these Particulars.

I could bring innumerable Instances of Insinuations as groundless as this ; but there needs no more to shew the Unfairness of these Gentlemen, as well as the Weakness of their Cause.

Let us now proceed to the second Point, which relates to the Restoration of our Commerce in the *West Indies*, and to the Satisfaction for the Losses of our Merchants in those Parts. Our honourable Gentleman took care always to magnify these

these Losses, as well as the Indignity of the Usage, neither of which needed any other Colours than their own to set them off in a Trading Nation. He likewise took as much Pains to convince the Publick, that a Minister deserv'd the most severe Punishments, if he should neglect to procure Satisfaction in this Case ; endeavouring, at the same time, to make the same Publick believe, that the present Minister had been guilty of that Crime ; one would swear he had thought that none of his Countrymen were able to read ; for any Man who can do that, is capable of finding that he insinuates a palpable Falsehood. The third Article of the Treaty, containing these Words — *His Catholick Majesty has declared, as he declares by the present Article, that he never meant to grant, nor will suffer to subsist, by Virtue of the Treaty of Vienna, any Privilege contrary to the Treaties here above confirm'd, viz. all the Treaties of Commerce, or Treaties of Peace, in which Commerce may be concern'd, antecedent to the Year 1725.*

This Article sufficiently secures us all that we can desire, with respect to our Trade, which is re-established again upon the same Foot on which it was established before, with the same Privileges to the Subjects of *Great Britain*, and with the same Restrictions on those of any other Country ;

try, abolishing and annulling totally those Engagements which *Spain* had enter'd into with the Empire, to our Prejudice, in Consequence of which our Commerce had been greatly obstructed for several Years.

As to the Satisfaction for the Losses of our Merchants, notwithstanding the Confidence with which it has been asserted that no Care was taken in that Particular, that Assertion is so far from being true, that nothing (excepting the Hearts of those who pronounc'd it) can be falser. There are no less than five Articles, the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, which entirely relate to this single Point, and the whole Treaty contains but Sixteen.

And in these Articles, Commissaries are to be appointed, and the Manner is settled for adjusting this Difference, a reciprocal Promise being made in the most solemn Manner, by the contracting Parties, the Kings of *Great Britain, France, and Spain*, that Justice shall be done in pursuance to the Determinations of the said Commissaries. Can any thing be more ludicrous than the Behaviour of these Persons, who expect their own bare Assertions should meet with more Credit than the Oaths of the greatest Princes. I know but one thing more ridiculous, and that is, That the same Persons should hope to bring the Publick over to their Interests, by doing what
would

would be the greatest Affront to a private Man, by treating them as if they had not common Sense.

The third and last Particular we are to take Notice of in the Treaty of *Seville*, is that which relates to the Succession of *Don Carlos* to the Dutchies of *Tuscany*, *Parma*, and *Placentia*, which, it is said, we are very little concern'd in. Nothing can be a better Proof of the Notions of Honour which these Gentlemen are possess'd of, than their asserting, that we are under no Obligations to engage in this Affair, when at the same time they can't deny our being Guarantees of the Peace of *Italy*, and bound in the most solemn Manner (if there is any Solemnity in Treaties) by the Quadruple Alliance, to see the Succession effectuated. The Emperor, we see, has fail'd in his Promise; so that it is now the Time for us to exert ourselves to oblige him to it, which was the principal End of our entering into that Alliance. He has shewn us plainly, that his Intentions are quite contrary to his Engagements, and that he is determin'd to keep to himself and his Family, what, if he had ever a Right to, he has no Right to now; having, long since, made it over to another.

The Treaty of *Seville* is, in a manner, a Transcript of the Quadruple Alliance; it

differs from it only in the Change that is made of 6000 *Swiss* or neutral Troops, for 6000 natural *Spaniards*. However small this Variation may be (and surely it does not seem much for the Advantage of *Spain* to change the best Troops for the worst in *Europe*) yet it is represented a Thing of the greatest Importance, and highest Injustice to the Emperor ; whereas it is so far from being, at least, the latter, that we should actually be justified in entering upon a War immediately with him upon this Account, which must be allow'd (even by the honourable Member, and the greatest Champions of Untruths) to be a Proceeding something more violent than that which we have us'd.

As our Honour is concern'd in this Affair, so is likewise the general Interest of *Europe*, and consequently our own particular one. We formerly oppos'd *France* when they aim'd at universal Monarchy, when they endeavour'd to enlarge their Dominions beyond what was consistent with the publick Security, we were never blam'd for this ; Why then should we be found fault with for opposing the same Design in the Emperor ? Would that grievous Yoke be more insupportable under a *French* than under a *German* Prince ? Whence this sudden and extraordinary Favour to that People ? It is something new, that these Gentlemen should be partial to that Quarter. That

That the Emperor's Views are too advantageous to himself, to be anywise safe to us; will need very little Proof. If we consider the vast Extent of his hereditary Dominions, the Empire, and what he has already in *Italy*, we shall easily perceive, that with this new Addition of Power, he would be Master of near one third of *Europe*; and that he wants no Inclination to make use of his Power, appears from his Engagements with *Spain* in 1725. His sole Aim was to raise another Monarch out of the *Austrian* Family, who, like *Charles* the Fifth, should be, in a manner, Sovereign of the whole World.

But to the great Happiness of the Publick (tho' to the great Misfortune of some private Men) his Majesty's prudent Measures have dissipated this Storm, and dispell'd those Clouds which were gather'd by the Ambition of an ungrateful Prince, who owes his Being to that very People he has been endeavouring to Ruin: so monstrous an Instance of Ingratitude in him might almost, in some Degree, excuse an Act of Injustice in us; surely then we cannot be blam'd for seeking to abridge his Power, by a religious Adherence to our Treaties: We must, in our own Defence, and in the Defence of all *Europe*, confine him within these Limits which were set him with his own Consent: We are strong in the Alliances

liances we have wisely procur'd, and in the Power of the Princes engag'd in the same Quarrel ; but we are stronger still in the Justice of our Cause, and in the Assistance of the King of Kings.

I have now gone thro', with as much Conciseness as possible, the principal Objections to the Treaty of *Seville*. I have confin'd myself as closely as I could to the Substance, and avoided the Shadow. As for all artful Insinuations and groundless Cavils (Arguments constantly made use of in a bad Cause) I have totally neglected them, because they shew more the Nature of those who deal in them, than the Nature of the Treaty itself, and because you will, very shortly, hear enough of that kind in another Place. My sole Design has been (what I hope it will ever be) to state the Matter fairly, and to prove, that our Engagements are such as we were oblig'd to enter into, in Honour, Conscience, and Interest. We ought, therefore, unanimously to concur in the Support of his Majesty in these Engagements, and that the more, as we should have been oblig'd to have done the same Thing, tho' they had been less worthy of our Approbation ; for there is a Necessity that the Parliament should be very tender in breaking of Treaties their Princes have made, since, without it, our Neighbours would have very little Confidence

dence in our Friendship, and never want Pretences for the Violation of their Faith, it being the only Method, in that Case, they can take to treat with us upon an equal Foot.

The next Thing I shall take notice of is the Affair of *Dunkirk*, which deserves our Consideration more for the Noise that has been made about it already, than for any that it will probably make hereafter; tho', at the same time, we need not doubt but it will occasion many florid Discourses, and many unjust Reflections against the Ministry; since it is the Custom of the Gentlemen on the other Side, not only to declaim upon any Point as long as the Reason for their Declamation subsists, but as long as their Resentments endure, which is generally a considerable Time longer: Of this we had a very signal Proof, the last Session of Parliament, in their Conduct with relation to the Affair before us; when (notwithstanding the Assurances of the King of *France*, that *Dunkirk* should be put into the State requir'd by the Treaty of *Utrecht*) they vented their Rage from Three in the Afternoon 'till Three the next Morning, nor were they satisfied 'till they had sacrificed several old and infirm Members to their Indignation.

It is impossible to describe the little Tricks and Arts made use of by that
 Parry

Party to succeed in this Attack upon the Ministry. The Secrecy of their Councils, and the Privacy of their Meeting had more the Air of a treasonable Design upon the Government, than an Accusation of a Minister, which is always an Undertaking no Man need to be ashamed of, when it is founded upon Reason. That Cause must surely be weak which has occasion for such Supports as these, for Truth can stand upon its own Legs, and confides in its own natural Strength.

Their Unfairness was as great, as their Management was mean and little. They not only surpriz'd the Ministers by attacking them where they least expected it, and, consequently, where they were least prepared to defend themselves, but they likewise endeavour'd to hinder them from having a Day appointed in which they might vindicate themselves, by producing those Papers which were alone capable of clearing their Conduct, at the same time pressing hard, that their own Evidence might be heard immediately; the Design of which was very obvious, and calculated only to prejudice and inflame the House in such a manner against the Ministers, that they might be sent to the Tower, without having Time allow'd them for their Justification.

But

But the Moderation of the House defeated all their Schemes, and a Day was appointed (as it was highly reasonable there should) in which the Accusers and Accused should debate the Point, without any other Advantages, to either Party, than what the Justice of the Cause supplied; the Consequence of which was, that the Ministers clear'd themselves to the Satisfaction of the Parliament, and made it appear, that they had not been wanting in their Endeavours, to put a Stop to the Reparation of the Harbour of *Dunkirk*, and, at the same time, the Malice of the opposite Party was unmask'd, and expos'd to publick View.

They still, however, pretend, that the Administration were negligent in their Duty, and that when they found that no immediate Satisfaction was to be obtain'd from their Remonstrances to the Court of *France*, they should have instantly acquainted the Parliament with it. I appeal to any reasonable Man (not to the Gentlemen I am speaking of) whether that had been a prudent Step, especially since the King of *France* continually assured us, that it was not done by his Connivance, and that he would, very soon, redress the Grievance. Had it been mention'd in Parliament, it had, in Honour, obliged us to have resent'd it in a Manner which, perhaps, might have had very dangerous Consequences, and had

E

obliged

obliged us (in case the *French* were as much determin'd to restore that Harbour as they have been represented) to declare War against *France* : How capable we were of any thing of that kind, at that Juncture, I need not determine. Any one that remembers with how much Difficulty the united Force of the Allies withstood the single Power of *France* in the late War, will want no Arguments to convince him, that *Great Britain* alone could not do it now, when it has so many other Enemies to deal with, especially, if (as the Gentlemen on the other Side insinuate) we are in a worse Condition than we were before, oppress'd with Taxes, and loaded with a Debt of Nine and Forty Millions.

But *Dunkirk* is now once more demolish'd: Let me then congratulate the Nation on having procur'd a Benefit of so great Importance, with so much Ease, and without any Expence, which, had we taken another Method, we could never have obtain'd, tho' we had sacrific'd Thousands and spent Millions: and let me lament the wretched Fate of those unhappy Men who have labour'd so long to no other Purpose, but to shew the World they oppose all Measures that are advantageous, and advise all Measures that are pernicious to their Country: And let me observe one Thing more to the Honour of *France*, that by their Behaviour

haviour in this Affair, they have fully clear'd themselves of those Suspicions of their Fidelity which have been unjustly thrown upon them, by doing a Thing (manifestly against their Interest to do) of their own free Will, which no Man of common Sense can say we could have (easily, I won't say possibly) forc'd them to against their Inclination.

I now am come to a Subject, which, from the Beginning, has caused great Debates, and will certainly continue so to do; this is the Maintenance of the *Hessian* Troops, a Body of 12000 Men in *Germany*, which we have taken into our Pay for some Years, since our Quarrel with the Emperor: It is represented that they are kept up only on Account of *Hanover*, and that this is a Violation of the Act of Settlement; neither of which is true. In the first Place, we maintain the *Hessian* Troops in order to form, in a short Time, if Occasion should be, a considerable Body of Men, in Conjunction with other Troops of our Confederates, to protect those Countries that are our Allies, to preserve the Neutrality of others, and, lastly, to cover the *Dutch* from the Emperor, without which, perhaps, they might not be able to keep their Engagements with us. As to the Second, That it is a Violation of the Act of Settlement, nothing can be a more malicious and groundless In-

E 2

sinnuation,

situation. It is very certain, that by that Act the King is depriv'd of the Power of doing any thing of that Kind, but the Parliament never did, nor ever could have design'd to take from themselves that Liberty ; and it is the Parliament, not the King, that maintain these Forces ; so that allowing all that can be said, allowing that *Hanover* is the principal Cause of this Expence, it cannot, in any respect. be call'd a Violation of the Act of Settlement ; it may as well be said, that because the King can raise no Money without his Parliament, when the People of *England* are tax'd by Parliament, the King is exercising arbitrary Power.

But farther : I can't help observing the Partiality of these Gentlemen, who condemn his present Majesty for doing that very Thing which King *James* the First is so universally, and so justly, condemn'd for not doing, I mean the Affair of the Palatinate, which he so scandalously neglected. He was blam'd for not protecting a People of the reform'd Religion, and abandoning a Nation which might have been useful in the Empire to the Protestant Interest. If these Arguments were of force against the Conduct of King *James*, they must be of equal force to justify the Conduct of the Parliament now ; the People of *Hanover* being a parallel Case, or rather still more deserving

ving our Protection, as the Difficulties they labour under, proceed from our Quarrels, not their own.

I think we have so far clear'd the Way in this Affair as to make it evident, that there is a Necessity for maintaining those Troops as long as our present Differences subsist, and, consequently, that it is highly unreasonable to oppose it: If it was objected only, that the Expence was too great, and that they might be secur'd, on our Side, in a cheaper Manner, there might be some Appearance of Reason on their Side, tho' even that has not yet been, and perhaps may not now be possible.

This foreign Army has always given great Uneasiness, as well as our Standing Forces at Home. The pretended Patriots launch out in the boldest Manner upon this Head; they employ all their Rhetorick to convince the Publick, that it is dangerous to our Constitution; they bring Examples out of ancient and modern History to convince us of what we all know, that most free Governments have, with Time, degenerated into absolute Monarchy, and that one of the Causes of those Revolutions is generally an Army; but they are not so fair as to own the original Cause to be the Corruption and Levity of the People, which render an Army necessary; that is the Disease, this is the Remedy, and tho', without
doubt,

doubt, they are both very terrible, yet the Misfortunes that at length fall upon a Country under these unhappy Circumstances should not be ascrib'd to the Badness of the Medicine, but to the Violence of the Distemper, which it is not in the Power of Man to cure ; for political, as well as natural Bodies, are subject to Changes, and have each their Periods.

In short, to be plain, our Country is in this declining State, and we must, in Time, expect the same Fate that all Governments have had : We are all corrupted and depraved, and we cannot hope to disperse the impending Storm ; we can only propose to avert it for a Time ; our only way to do this is to maintain a Standing Force : It ought to be as small a one as is consistent with the publick Security ; but we must remember that our Neighbours have all great Armies, and that Force is only to be repell'd by Force ; and we must likewise remember that we have a Pretender to the Throne, and a divided People ; we cannot therefore have any Prospect of maintaining ourselves, at any time, against Popery and Slavery without an Army ; and we must not be uneasy at this present confus'd Conjunction, if that Army is more numerous than in a Time of profound Peace.

It naturally occurs to me now, to mention the *Irish* Recruits ; but I shall mention them

them with quite a different View, from those who have made so great a Noise about them. That Affair is quite over, so that I need not enter into the Dispute whether it was justifiable or not; I shall only infer from the Easiness with which his Majesty gave up that Point; how little we have to apprehend from so gracious a Prince, and to observe that our terrible Army has not lessen'd, in any respect, his Compliance with the Desires of his People.

I have now run thro' all the grand Subjects of Clamour. I have endeavour'd to explain and justify the Measures of the Ministry, and that with no other Intention than to convince you (as I think I ought to endeavour to do, as I am convinced of it myself) that their Views are solely set on the Welfare of their Country, as the Views of their Opponents are solely set on the Welfare of themselves. If I have let fall some Expressions that may appear too harsh, as it is possible I may have done in the Heat of my Discourse, I hope you will impute them to their true Cause, the Indignation that fires every honest Man to see the Innocent accus'd unjustly, and to see that noble Virtue, Patriotism, basely employ'd as a Cloak to Ambition.

I might have taken a great deal of Notice of the Insinuations of that Set of Men, with respect to the Negotiations of the Ministers

nisters now said to be carrying on with the Emperor, which imply no less than that they repent of their former Engagements with *Spain*, and are now throwing themselves into the Hands of another Power: but this I am confident is false; and, were it true, I cannot help observing how unfair these Men are, who are equally displeas'd with the Measures of the Ministers; whether they are good or bad, whether they are such as they themselves have approv'd or disapprov'd.

This is a most convincing Proof, that they are Enemies to the Man and not to his Actions, which has been always esteem'd a Sign of groundless Prejudices, and unjustifiable Resentments; as Men who are capable of being bias'd by such Motives, have always been abhorr'd, and deem'd the Bane of human Society.

F I N I S.



